Where Do Drones Fit in Public Health? Investigating the Military's Vision for Disease Prevention

Views 391

Posted on: Tuesday, December 31st 2024 at 10:30 am
Written By: GreenMedInfo Research Group (/gmi-blogs/gmi%20research%20group)

Recently uncovered documents reveal a classified military proposal to deploy self-spreading vaccines via drones, raising new questions about pandemic response technologies.

Quick Summary:

- **A 2018 DARPA proposal code-named DEFUSE, revealed through FOIA requests and whistleblower testimony, detailed plans to use military drones for "large-**

area inoculation of humans" with self-spreading vaccines and aerosolized biologics.

- **The timeline shows concerning patterns: DARPA's early work with Moderna on coronavirus vaccines began in 2012, followed by a 2016 patent containing genetic sequences later found to have a "one-in-3-trillion" chance of naturally matching the COVID-19 virus, culminating in an unprecedented 26% increase in military drone funding just before the pandemic.**
- **During the pandemic, multiple nations rapidly deployed drones for "disinfection" despite WHO and UNICEF documentation questioning this practice's effectiveness, raising questions about potential alternative purposes for these widespread aerial operations.**

This comprehensive analysis draws from investigative journalist **Jon Fleetwood's detailed exposé (https://jonfleetwood.substack.com/p/drones-to-spray-self-spreading-covid?)** published on his Substack platform in December 2024. Through extensive research supported by Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and whistleblower testimonies, Fleetwood uncovered previously classified information about a significant military-scientific initiative that may reshape our understanding of pandemic response technologies and public health interventions.

Introduction:

In March 2018, EcoHealth Alliance submitted a proposal to DARPA codenamed "DEFUSE." Fleetwood's investigation, drawing from FOIA requests and whistleblower disclosures, reveals extensive documentation regarding the development and potential deployment of aerosolized **vaccine (/anti-therapeutic-action/vaccination-all)** technologies. The significance of these findings extends beyond conventional understanding of public health measures, presenting important implications for national security and public policy.

Historical Context:

The intersection of military technology and public health intervention has precedent in U.S. history. Fleetwood notes past incidents of government deployment of biological agents, including Operation LAC in the mid-1900s, when Stanford University and the U.S. Army Chemical Corps dispersed zinc cadmium sulfide particles from aircraft over unsuspecting Americans. This historical context provides a framework for examining current technological developments in this domain.

Technical Framework:

The DEFUSE proposal centered on developing sophisticated delivery systems for biological materials. PARC (Palo Alto Research Center) emerged as a crucial player, tasked with creating scalable aerosol delivery systems. Their technology specifically addressed "large area inoculation of animals/humans" using novel spray mechanisms capable of handling highly viscous and concentrated fluids. The technical specifications detailed in the proposal reveal an ambitious scope far beyond conventional vaccine delivery methods.

Chronological Development:

The timeline reveals a systematic progression of related technologies. DARPA established contracts with Moderna for RNA-based **coronavirus vaccine (/anti-therapeutic-action/vaccination-covid-19)** development as early as 2012 under project codename

'ADEPT: PROTECT.' By 2016, Moderna had patented a genetic sequence that would later draw scientific attention. According to research published in *Frontiers in Virology* in February 2022, this sequence showed remarkable similarity to SARS-CoV-2, with researchers calculating a "one-in-3-trillion" chance of natural occurrence.

Institutional Collaboration:

Fleetwood's investigation unveils a complex network of organizations contributing to the DEFUSE project's development. EcoHealth Alliance served as the primary proposer, while DARPA maintained established relationships with both Moderna and PARC. The University of Wisconsin-Madison's drone research programs and the National Wildlife Health Center's involvement in field trials created an interconnected research and development ecosystem spanning military, academic, and private sector institutions.

Technical Capabilities:

The documents describe several groundbreaking technologies, including "self-disseminating treatments" termed as "transmissible recombinant vaccines." These developments incorporated therapeutic interfering particles and self-spreading antiviral therapies, alongside novel microparticle delivery systems. The technical specifications outlined in the DEFUSE proposal suggest capabilities far beyond conventional vaccine delivery methods.

Funding Patterns:

A remarkable 26% increase in military drone funding marked the FY2019 budget, representing the largest quantity of drone purchases by the Pentagon in six years. This unprecedented surge aligned perfectly with the DEFUSE proposal's timeline and technological requirements, suggesting coordinated development of these capabilities.

Global Implementation:

Following **COVID-19's (/disease/coronavirus-disease-covid-19)** emergence, multiple nations deployed drones for purported disinfection purposes beginning January 2020. China led these efforts, followed by implementations in the UAE, Spain, South Korea, the United States, Indonesia, and France. The rapid adoption of this technology across multiple nations raises questions about coordination and shared technological developments.

Scientific Scrutiny:

Both UNICEF and World Health Organization documentation questioned the effectiveness of drone-based disinfection methods. A September 2021 Global Policy study in the National Library of Medicine emphasized that "spraying disinfectants has little or no effect on disease control," raising significant questions about the true purpose of these operations.

Regulatory Framework:

The FAA's December 2019 integration of drones into national airspace, specifically allowing "operations over people and at night," coincided with the timeline of these developments. This regulatory shift facilitated complex drone operations aligned with the capabilities described in the DEFUSE proposal, suggesting coordinated preparation for widespread deployment.

Implications:

The convergence of multiple advanced technologies raises profound questions about the future of public health interventions and military technology development. The ethical implications of deploying biological agents without informed consent, combined with the technical feasibility of self-spreading vaccines, demand careful consideration from policymakers and the public alike.

Conclusion:

Fleetwood's investigation reveals a sophisticated and coordinated effort to develop advanced biological delivery systems with potentially far-reaching implications. The intersection of drone technology, aerosol delivery mechanisms, and self-spreading vaccines represents a significant advancement in biological deployment capabilities, while raising important questions about oversight, ethical considerations, and public consent. The documentation suggests a level of technological and institutional coordination that merits further investigation and public discourse.

Reference

1. Fleetwood, J. (2024, December 24). **Drones Spray 'Self-Spreading' COVID-19 Vaccine for 'Large-Area Inoculation of Humans' in 'DEFUSE' EcoHealth/DARPA Project. Substack (https://jonfleetwood.substack.com/p/drones-to-spray-self-spreading-covid)**.